

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 FAA-00

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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6747

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 1887

E. O. 11652: XGDS-3

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, JA

SUBJ: LDP DIET MEMBER REQUESTS APPOINTMENT WITH SENATOR CHURCH

REF: TOKYO 1794

1. LDP LOWER HOUSE MEMBER BUNSEI SATO (MIZUTA FACTION) TOLD US FEB 6 THAT LDP SEC GEN NAKASONE HAS APPOINTED HIM CHAIRMAN OF AN LDP "LOCKHEED PROBLEM RESEARCH COMMITTEE." IN THIS CAPACITY SATO, ALONG WITH AN INTERPRETER AND LDP PRESS BUREAU STAFFER, WILL DEPART FOR WASHINGTON FEB 8 OR 9.

2. SATO REQUESTED DEPARTMENT'S ASSISTANCE IN ARRANGING APPOINTMENT FOR HIM WITH SEN CHURCH AT ANY TIME FROM FEB 10-13. SATO ADDED THAT HE, ALONG WITH LDP LOWER HOUSE MEMBERS HAJIME ISHII AND KEIWA OKUDA, TALKED WITH SEN CHURCH AT HIS SENATE OFFICE FOR ABOUT AN HOUR ON JUL 30, 1971. AT THAT TIME, SATO WAS LDP PRESS BUREAU CHIEF AND OKUDA WAS HIS DEPUTY; ISHII WAS LDP FOREIGN AFFAIRS DIVISION CHIEF.

3. SATO SAID THAT, ALTHOUGH THE FOREIGN MINISTRY -- AND PRESUMABLY THE JAPANESE EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON -- WOULD BE INFORMED OF HIS VISIT, THERE WOULD BE NO PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT. HE FURTHER URGED US TO HOLD
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THE INFORMATION CLOSELY.

4. DURING PREVIOUSLY SCHEDULED COURTESY CALL FEB 6, NAKASONE TOLD SHERMAN (EA/J) ABOUT THE CONFIDENTIAL SATO MISSION AND URGED DEPARTMENT'S GOOD OFFICES. HE COMMENTED THAT IT WAS UNFORTUNATE TO HAVE THE LOCKHEED PROBLEM ARISE JUST WHEN THE KASUGA ATTACK ON JCP CHAIRMAN MIYAMOTO, WHICH WOULD HAVE BEEN USEFUL IN AN ELECTION YEAR, WAS HAVING SOME EFFECT. HE ALSO COMMENTED THAT THE LOCKHEED FUROR MIGHT VERY WELL AFFECT THE TIMING OF GENERAL ELECTIONS. HE SAID THAT WHILE IT MAY BE A GOOD THING TO INVESTIGATE SUCH MATTERS ON A DOMESTIC BASIS, INVOLVEMENT OF OTHER COUNTRIES WAS A DIFFERENT QUESTION AND SHOULD BE CAREFULLY CONSIDERED. HE HOPED THE USGOVT WERE AWARE OF THIS AND THAT THE PROBLEM WOULD BE HANDLED VERY CAREFULLY. REFERRING TO THE ALLEGATIONS THAT A DEAL FAVORING LOCKHEED HAD BEEN CONCLUDED BETWEEN PRESIDENT NIXON AND FORMER PRIME MINISTER TANAKA, NAKASONE SAID THAT ONLY THE TWO COULD HAVE ANY KNOWLEDGE OF THE FACTS. IN CLOSING, HE REEMPHASIZED THE NEED FOR CAUTION IN THE USG'S HANDLING OF THE AFFAIR.

5. COMMENT: LDP LEADERSHIP IS VERY CONCERNED ABOUT COURSE OF LOCKHEED INVESTIGATIONS AND STRONGLY DESIRES THAT SATO BE RECEIVED BY APPROPRIATE PERSONS. WE WOULD RECOMMEND, THEREFORE, THAT APPROPRIATE ASSISTANCE BE GRANTED TO SATO IN HIS ATTEMPT TO SEE SENATOR CHURCH.

6. EMBASSY ASSISTANCE HAS NOT BEEN REQUESTED BY CGP, DSP OR JSP DELEGATIONS (SEPTTEL) AND WE PRESUME DEPARTMENT WILL NOT BE CALLED UPON FOR MUCH ASSISTANCE. IF SENATORS SHOULD ASK DEPARTMENT'S ADVICE ON MEETING WITH OPPOSITION MPS, WE WOULD SUGGEST THAT THEY RESPOND COURTEOUSLY WITHIN THE LIMITS OF THEIR SCHEDULES.
HODGSON

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